

THE THOMAS COUNTY CAT.

We publish elsewhere Anderson's land bill. The bill has been favorably reported back from the House committee on public lands, and there is hardly a question but what it will pass the Senate.

The Kansas Pacific Railroad under the adjustment is shown to have taken 67,000 acres outside the limits of the grant, and Mr. Sparks reports the proper adjustment he has made will restore in all 250,000 acres to the public domain for homestead settlement.—Ex.

Ex-Governor Crawford, who is the State agent for Kansas for the adjustment of railroad land grants writes as follows of Commissioner Sparks: "No one I think can question Mr. Sparks' honesty. None will doubt his courage. Having those qualities, he will as I believe, with proper support, adjust these grants." While we think that Commissioner Sparks has been a little too severe on the settler, we cannot but admire the sincerity in which he is fighting for the restoration of public lands illegally held by the railroad companies. He has accomplished a great deal already and we look for the restoration of large bodies of land held illegally held by railroad corporations.

The farmer has no protection on the products of his farm and must sell his grain at a price but little above the cost of producing. In return he must pay fictitious values for all goods that he purchases, values made fictitious by a system of highway robbery familiarly known as "protection." It swindles the producer both ways. Kansas is an agricultural state and the present tariff laws make a very unequal condition of affairs. We are not in favor of removing the tariff from manufactured goods at one stroke. The reduction contemplated by the Morrison bill would be supported as an equitable measure by western members but for the bitter feelings kept aggravated by scheming partisans. Nine out of ten of our western members will vote with their party and for the monopolists of the east. Anderson is the only Kansas congressman who had the grit to vote his convictions, but such a howl was set up by the henchmen about fealty to the party that he had not the courage to continue to vote his sentiments.

Quickville.

It is very dry in this burg; we need rain as things begin to wilt and too dry to brake.

After putting a few of these tormented squirrels to sleep I took a little time and visited Colby to lay in a few rations and see for myself what prospect there was for a business place, and found it quite a lively little town and town property booming and everybody as busy as bees. Somethings were selling very reasonable, and as I was viewing the prospects around, the bells in all directions commenced to jingle, which reminded me of dinner, and as I had come a long way and had got an early breakfast, as us farmers have to do when we come to town, I was in a good condition for a square meal, with all the jolting I had got with coming, so in I went to see what the jingle had as it smelled pretty good, and to my astonishment the smell with half filled dishes thrown in was about the substance there was. Good Lord deliver me from evil. A little piece of meat about the size of a minnow to put before the sturdy farmers that have put this country into a paradise, they want something that will lay on the muscle so that they can stand the hardships. Store clerks, lawyers, land grabbers, speculators and county officers may stand such meals, but you may depend that us farmers want something more than half filled dishes rattling under our noses. Now for God's sake give us a decent meal when we come to trade and circulate our money amongst you, for you may depend the farmer is the bone and sinew, without them your lots would not be worth much. You might shut up shop and bury your town in the south Sappa if you kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Now I do not know whether the other restaurant and hotels put on more of the needful, hope they do, for bear in mind it is a great drawback to a place to send a customer home half fed, whereby if he gets as good a meal as he gets at home he would feel in better humor and trade more and it would not be a drag to him to come again.

A FARMER.

Prentiss on Thomas County.

The objective point of the expedition was Thomas county and the present port for Colby, is a station which formerly bore the name of Cleveland, but is now officially known as Oakley. From this point a daily stage runs to Colby. If you wish to leave any property to your children, you will take this stage. If you are a reckless prodigal, bent on squandering your wealth as soon as possible; if you wish to enable a bandit to fix up his cave with oriental splendor, you will patronize an Oakley livery stable keeper. The distance from Oakley to Colby is estimated at from twenty-two to twenty-eight miles, but as an Oakley livery team can make the distance in three hours and have strength enough left to return the next day, it is not much above the first figure. Monument Station is nearer to Colby, and it is probable that a hack line will soon be established between the two points.

The traveler who thinks that he realizes the high vastness of the plains by looking from the car windows is mistaken. That is like looking at the ocean from the shore, while he who journeys in a carriage or on horseback is like a voyager in the midst of the deep. Every time this great high country is visited the higher and wider it looks. It never encourages that familiarity which breeds contempt. All the Fourth of July speeches do not say as much for the boundless enterprise of American people as the fact that they dare enter upon the settlement of these hitherto tremendous, treeless, shadeless solitude. If a new seal is ever designed for the State of Kansas, it ought to represent the victorious American eagle perched on the roof of a sod house, with the motto, "Proved Up."

Colby, a town which has attained the mature age of one year, was reached at sunset and was inspected by moonlight and by daylight. It has nothing to mark it as a frontier or even a new town. There is not a sod house or a shanty in the place, not a building of any magnitude that is not painted; the sidewalks are better than the average Atchison article. The stores sell dry goods and groceries at Commercial street prices. Art, too, has obtained a foothold. The Martin drug store obtained the services of an eastern paper hanger, and now you see his work all over town. We had dreaded the frontier hotel, having experienced hunger and some bloodshed in the course of a day and night experience at such in the past, but we really met, as old Shenstone has it, "Our warmest welcome at an inn." The Colby House supplied every want of the Champion's commissioners. Here we refreshed ourselves as we studied Thomas county, past, present and future.

Thomas county is now fully incorporated and is eligible to vote bonds, establish a poor house, and perform all and singular, the duties of a county. The first term of the district court was held by Judge Pratt two weeks ago. In these days when a lot of imported cranks and ruffians are declaring in favor of the abolition of God and the extinguishment of law, it is refreshing to see that the American citizen who deserves the name will not live without law. As soon as possible after a county has settlers, it insists on a district judge and a term of court. Thomas county, with the assistance of Sherman, attached for judicial purposes, mustered a docket of twenty-two cases—including divorce cases. The local historian states that the county has had its first marriage, its first baby and its first divorce.

As has been stated before in these columns, in looking for land in these regions, a guide is almost indispensable. Residents accustomed to the country become accurate judges of distances, and can readily find the surveyor's marks. Mr. Lessenger, of Colby, very kindly offered his services and without a "skip or a break," went directly to the spot and said, "Here is your corner." The country around was wonderfully changed. Every quarter in the north part of the county seemed to have its house and breaking, and it was easy to believe the latest statement that the county has now 4,000 inhabitants. Of course the "neighbors" were interviewed; the nearest was found to be a native Kansan, his wife an energetic production of Iowa. Like everybody else, they were found zealous and hopeful,

and glad to aid in securing to a soldier's child the right her father possessed, but never realized after suffering the dangers of the field and terrors of the prison camp.

As Hope dwelt out in the sod houses, so she was found to have a residence in town. The talk was of corner lots; of a new National bank; of 250,000 brick to be burned this season; of brick business houses already contracted for; of a \$7,000 hotel as nearly a sure thing, and of boom generally. Much of the information concerning Colby's future was obtained from Mr. James M. Warden, who, with R. S. Newell, both of Frankfort, has gone to make the country grow up. To go into details would be to infringe on the province of the Thomas County CAT, which we found going to press, not on the old Ben Franklin article, but on a modern stop cylinder. Mr. Eugene Worcester, the editor, to whom we were placed under many obligations started his paper in a sod house with seven subscribers. His CAT now arches his spine in an office fitted up with all the modern appliances, and prospers.

No sketch as brief as this must be can give an idea of the life and energy that prevades the Northwest. Thomas county is but a type of the whole region. Four thousand people are gathered there perfectly courageous and confident that they will succeed—if it rains. So far the rain has fallen. We saw the water in pools and there is an added greenness in the draws, the low "lagoons," as they are called, and the old buffalo wallows. Settlers remark that the coming last year of weeds never before seen. The breaking of the buffalo grass sod removes from the surface a perfectly water tight covering. Under this country lies what seems a shallow subterranean lake, deeper in some places than in others. On the elevation of the surface depends the distance to this water varying from twelve feet to one hundred and fifty. The county is dependent for water on the rain and on the wells. The great railroad well at Oakley supplies water for farmers for miles around. How long a farmer will haul water depends on his enterprise. We saw a farmer at the well who did not come for water; he had just reached water on his claim at the depth of fifty-six feet. So the rain comes down and the windmill pumps lift the water to the surface, and the sod is turned over at the rate of hundreds of acres every day, and men believe that agriculturally they are "all right" in a country without a river and without a tree, and may the Lord who raised up for our benefit Stowell, and Lessenger, and McGonigal, and Worcester, and the rest of the good fellows at Colby, grant that there may be no disappointment.

Monument.

Monument Sunday School opened in due form Sunday, May 23d. About fifty persons were present, and to start with Monument Sabbath school bids fair to be a rival of some large cities. At Ennis City there is no building large enough at present suitable for a Sabbath school. The time will soon come when Ennis City will have a church and school house. Rev. Haggart, of Oakley, a Methodist minister, preached at Monument last Sunday to a full house. The next services will be at the school house on June 13th, at 3 p. m. S. RITCHIEY.

Cumberland Items.

Once more I attempt to write a few items.

Dry weather is making a good many to think of their wives' folks, but I think we will get rain soon. Crops look well and stock are doing well.

Minnie Strayer left for Carlton, Neb., this morning, but we have some nice girls that may fill the vacancy.

Henry Knudson has got his fence up which makes quite an improvement in our midst. I wonder what makes that young lady so much interested in his welfare. Hope it will end in Henry taking a better half in the near future.

Our school is in session now. It promises to be a success; it is what has been needed in this district very much. We have Sunday school every Sabbath and preaching alternately.

Query. Who issued the licence for our Probate Judge. MOLLIE.

Remember!

—We are headquarters for Dry Goods, boots and shoes.

J. W. ALLEN & Sons.

SOLD OUT!

BECAUSE

Our supply of ready cash was not sufficient to come to time on freight bills, I have sold the old Pioneer building on the corner and will forever vacate those quarters in a few weeks. I have made arrangements for a building of prodigious size which will be ready for occupancy in a few weeks. To save the trouble of moving goods, I have knocked the "stuffin" out of prices on Dry Goods, Notions, Hats and Caps, Boots and Shoes, Groceries, etc. Remember that necessity compels us to sell these goods at any price. The slaughter has commenced.

M. DONELAN.